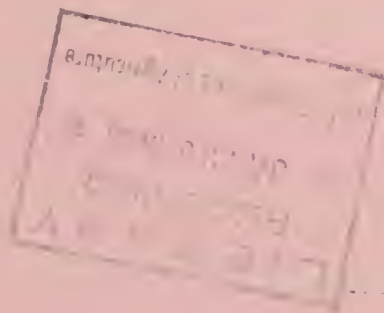


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homemakers' chat

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U. S. DEPARTMENT
OF AGRICULTURE



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MONDAY, DECEMBER 14, 1942

SUBJECT: "WARTIME COOKING WARE." Information from home economists of the U. S. Department of Agriculture and officials of the Office of Price Administration.

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The bride of 1943 is likely to be cooking her first meals in utensils her mother never knew. She may be frying eggs in a pottery skillet...baking pie in a fiber pan...boiling vegetables in earthenware...and roasting meat in glass. For the familiar metal pans and kettles are vanishing from the stores along with metal kitchen tools and gadgets. In their places are various sorts of victory kitchenware made of non-strategic materials.

The familiar metal cooking utensils which American women have been taking for granted all these years have been getting their marching orders thick and fast lately. Metal must go to war, so the cook must learn to use materials not needed at the front.

Of course, aluminum, tin, copper and stainless steel have been getting scarcer and scarcer for some time. Many a big store of household goods now can boast of only one lone aluminum double-boiler, or one last tin pie-plate. Housewives, becoming accustomed to the lack of these metals, have been turning more and more to cast iron, enamel and galvanized ware. But now cuts and curtailments have come for these, too.

Briefly, here's what's been happening to kitchen metals just in the last couple of months. War orders for iron kitchenware came in October. The War Production Board ordered a cut in the manufacture of iron skillets, griddles, kettles and other kitchenware from 300 different items to only 12, in order to conserve vital iron needed for war uses.

Also in October came war orders for enamelware. "Less glamor and more utility" was the gist of the order curtailing the manufacture of enamelware. Time was when the bride could select her enamel bowls, kettles, pots and pans according to the color scheme of her kitchen. She could have red, green, yellow or almost any color that harmonized with the room. And she could choose from a great variety of shapes, sizes and styles. But not the bride of '43. Out of some 450 enamelware items made in peacetime only 25 are left for wartime manufacture. The steel that makes the base for enamelware must go to war instead of the kitchen.

More orders affecting the kitchen came in November. First came an order for cuts in galvanized ware...articles like kitchen garbage cans and the farmyard water pail. Some 150 galvanized items were cut to just 6 in order to release some 44 thousand tons of steel and over 10 thousand tons of zinc for the war effort.

Finally, on November 23 came Order L-30-d--a strenuous order cutting the manufacture of all the varied and colorful array of metal utensils and gadgets that fill up many a kitchen drawer. It's good bye to many a kitchen tool from metal jar and bottle openers, cork screws, sieves, and sifters to dippers, vegetable bins and storage canisters. Only 8 metal items have survived--wire strainers, can openers, egg beaters, food mills, food choppers and grinders, also cake turners and baking spoons for commercial food manufacture. But new materials are coming in to take the place of the familiar metals. Wood, paperboard, glass, earthenware and pottery are moving into the kitchen to volunteer for the duration. And the wartime bride will learn the secrets of cooking in these new materials and of caring for them.

Now here is what home equipment specialists of the U. S. Department of Agriculture suggest about cooking in the new cooking dishes of glass, pottery or earthenware. To begin with, they say, make sure the dish is meant for top-stove cooking if you are going to use it on top of the stove. Some pottery, earthenware and glass is meant only for the oven. Read the label on the dish before you cook

in it to be sure you use it correctly.

Second, avoid sudden changes in temperature with pottery, earthenware and glass. If you put very cold food in one of these dishes, have the dish cold first. If you put in hot food, heat the dish first in warm water. Don't try to handle a hot dish with a wet dishcloth or a wet holder. Never pour boiling water into a cold dish. And never put pottery, earthenware or glass on the stove empty. Be sure the dish holds liquid, or fat, or some moist food before it goes over heat.

Third, be sure not have the heat too high for earthenware and pottery. Glass, made for the purpose, can cook over high heat. But with some of the new pottery cooking containers, the safe rule is: "Simmer and Serve." A little too much heat may crack it in a jiffy. Now if you have a stove that can't be turned low, you can use an asbestos mat under the dish to spread the heat. That will save scorching in one place on the bottom and possibly cracking. But here's a safety note about using an asbestos mat on a gas stove. Be sure the burners are clean before you put such a mat over them. If you use glass or pottery on a kerosene stove, be sure the wick is trimmed evenly and all carbon is wiped off so there are no high points of flame coming up to crack the dish.

Of course, these dishes need more careful handling than metal. Metal may survive bangs, bumps and knocks with only dents or scratches, but rough treatment is likely to be fatal to earthenware, pottery and glass. Some careful cooks use wooden spoons only to stir or beat food in these containers for fear metal spoons might chip and crack them.

Finally, a tip about dishwashing. Rinse these new dishes as soon as they are empty, using water about the same temperature as the dish. Never put a hot dish in a cold wet sink or in cold water. This may easily crack it. Otherwise, wash pottery, earthenware and glass as you do china--with warm soapsuds, and a hot water rinse. Dry with a soft towel.

